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8. *Horace*.—'Mind your own business' (324).
 9. *Damasippus*.—'You are an *amator*' (325).
 10. *Horace*.—'Mercy, mercy, Mr. Major *insanus*: spare me, I'm only, after all, a *Minor insanus*' (326).

C. K.

THE ANCIENTS AND THE MODERNS—AN ENTENTE CORDIALE¹

This is an age which is terminating, and one may say terminating, I think, without fear of contradiction, because we are quite certainly assisting at the birth of a new one. It has terminated, this older time, with the triumph of an *entente cordiale* which awaited only this supreme trial to test its fundamental strength and honesty of purpose. It is a pleasant function at the opening of this new time to suggest to you an *entente cordiale* of the two important branches of study that form our most immediate concern, the Classics and the Modern Languages, an *entente cordiale* figured by our combined meeting of to-day.

The present time is not the only one that has resounded with the blows dealt the classic literatures. The Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns, begun by the Frenchman Perrault in the last years of the seventeenth century, revived by Houdard de la Motte a score of years later, echoing on the other side of the Channel in the Battle of the Books, has never been allowed to end in compromise or reconciliation. Originally founded upon a non-sequitur, the contention that, since the moderns came later in time, therefore they are the more excellent, the attacks still fortify themselves with the same sort of logic. One is inclined to suspect that much of the credit yielded to the party of the opposition has been due to the allegation that the classically trained men have been the first to mount to the assault. A strange sort of logic, this, in the argument that one hears repeated from day to day. As Professor Hill of Harvard remarked on the occasion of Charles Francis Adams's Phi Beta Kappa Oration, why not swallow atheism because so many professed atheists were once professing Christians?

It is unhappily true, I think, that only too many of our teachers of Modern Languages have borne arms in the Red battalions. Most of us have probably been trained to a greater or less degree in the Classics, and, we hope, remember them with affection and profit. It shall be our attempt to suggest, however superficially and imperfectly within the brief time at our disposal, not only the considerations of pleasure and affection, but those of a more selfish nature that should actuate a modern alliance of the Ancients and the Moderns.

How long is it, teachers of Modern Languages, before the guns that have hurled such a quantity of metal at the Classics will be dropping their projectiles all about our own defences? Do we realise sufficiently the trend of modern education to comprehend the importance of

offensive and defensive alliances? Is not the vigorous campaign in the interests of Spanish, waged noisily enough, too, by the publishers, a sign of the direction in which we are going?

The blatant campaign to advance Spanish calls our startled attention to the two great opposing forces in education to-day. There is a great conflict between the spirit and the senses that in one way or another governs our modern choice. On one hand stand the Classics with all the inherited dignity of wisdom and tradition felt from Dante's day to our own. What a pity that the number is steadily decreasing of those who can feel as Dante did on seeing Homer and Lucan and other classic worthies in the limbo of the inferno,

Genti v'eran con occhi tardi e gravi
 Di grande autorità ne' lor sembianti;
 Parlavan rado, con voci soavi,

or can exclaim of any one writer as Dante did of the great Greek who dominated all the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, "il maestro di coloro che sanno". Triumphant and intolerant science has made it more and more difficult for us to free ourselves and our students from the force of tangible actuality, from the controlling purpose of making a living, and instead to enlarge the bounds of the spirit and the mind. The present enormous vogue of commercial Spanish shows how rapidly the older conception of education seems to be breaking down or giving way, and being replaced by mere instruction. I have not the slightest quarrel with Spanish, but most emphatically I have with the fashion in which it is being taught. How many there are who would have us cast overboard the robust literature of Spain that still remains in our College curriculum, because it is evident that our commercial future is bound up with the progress of South America, who would have us teach provincialisms of pronunciation and idiom because we have to do commercially with those who use them. Is it because we have no great future of that stripe with the French Canadians that French has so far remained inviolate in the teaching of its pronunciation, or because the smoky figure of a great French commerce has not ascended from the magician's bottle that we have not been deluged with an equal number of texts in commercial French, as if, forsooth, there were such a thing? Professor Ernest Wilkins, in a paper read before The New England Modern Language Association, in Boston, a week ago, calls attention to the fact that the number of students studying Spanish in School and College is almost exactly equal to that of students taking French and that an alarmingly larger and larger proportion of these young pupils are pursuing Spanish from the commercial point of view.

The victorious scientist and educationist are vociferously insisting that this is an age of fact. What they mean by fact is concentration of the attention upon immediate needs for existence. They are firmly convinced that all branches of education must be tested by this consideration. Since the Classics will not, in their

¹This paper was read at a joint meeting of the Vermont Section of The Classical Association of New England and of The New England Modern Language Association, May 16, 1919.

view, measure to their standard, they must go. The same test is confidently being applied to other subjects, and you must be warned that we are now being called upon to explain and justify the reading of a classic French tragedy. The test of the practical is settling its choking ring about the necks of all, and no one is now crying more loudly in horror than some of the real scientists who themselves helped to pull down the lofty structure.

All the high-voiced denial of the things of the spirit that have been bequeathed us by the Classics is inevitably certain to lead in our modern life to the kind of intellectual determinism that rules the novels of Zola, the tyranny of the 'petit fait' of our environment, which breeds one of two things—a cynical pessimism, or an equally brash and shallow optimism.

What are the real advantages to be grasped by an active alliance with the Classics or by the support of them? Well, it depends in a very great measure, I fancy, upon what you propose to do, to educate or to instruct.

I venture to say, that, for the purposes of a veritable education, we have still to seek the substitute for the classic languages and mathematics as mental disciplines. For this statement I expect to be taken violently to task, but I rest content to reply that with the advocates of other substitutes still lies the burden of proof. Others, the natural sciences and what not, have been proposed, but we still need proof whether, in cases where such new disciplines have supplanted Greek and Latin and Mathematics, taught, as was Mrs. Battell's whist, with the full rigors of the game, students are as well able to express themselves with clarity and sequence.

Meanwhile, we might as well drop for all time the notion that Greek and Latin are in themselves a mysterious sort of fetic, to be worshipped and mentioned with bated breath. We ought to see more clearly that the main business, after all, as in mathematics, is the expression of ideas and not the description of facts. And I think it susceptible of proof that the latter may be considerably dependent upon the former. Are we teachers of Modern Languages content to find our interest in developing a capacity for the comprehension and expressions of ideas? Then let us not be too ready to help bury Roman literature, let us say; let us reflect that the Romans, with their habit of mental discipline that made them the greatest jurists in the world, made of Latin one of the most logical instruments of expression. In spite of everything, consciously or unconsciously, that logic is communicable.

Are we fundamentally anxious that our students shall acquire easily not only the superficial facts and essentials of the grammar and syntax of the Modern Languages, but shall understand them thoroughly and handle them skilfully? Then I say to you that it is much to your interest to have them well-trained in Greek and Latin. As they study Latin, they are early drilled in a complex but logical language structure which

is reflected in the Modern Languages, which is, indeed, the actual parent of the Romance group. The ease and perfection with which the average student will do his language work will vary directly with the amount of his precedent training in the Classics.

To tell us that the study of the Classics may well begin in the Colleges will not do, since such studies may very materially crowd the time devoted to the Modern Languages, but more especially because training in Greek and Latin in the early period of youth is imperative, since the knowledge possible to acquire later will be decidedly insufficient. Neither will it do to urge the opinion so often vented that it serves quite as useful a purpose to read our Classics in translation. It admits of no discussion that the student who, not having read the originals, has read his translations has gained something by having read the translations, but there is a degree of foolish presumption in making that fact the warrant for the conclusion that the translations offer the same profit as the original, or perhaps even more profit, because the disturbing element of another language is absent. Who cannot realise that in translation into English a curtain has imperceptibly been dropped between the Greek or the Latin and the modern reader? And mark you, some of the most vigorous supporters of this idea are those who would least tolerate its application to modern French or German literature. The 'feeling' that resided in the muscular and sinewy form of expression of the tongue has insensibly been lost, the sense of exquisite structure and balance and logic in the medium to which the thought itself belonged. This is the thing of which our student has been robbed.

It is permissible, perhaps, to depart for the moment from the interrelations of the Classics and the Modern Languages to consider how our teachers of English may be helped mightily in their labors by the conservation of the Classics in the curriculum. This matter has so often been discussed that it seems almost too obvious to bring it forward, except that we should never forget that every word said for English is applicable to the Modern Languages, to whatever degree we give training in the writing of them. The process of formation of the English language has been, to be sure, eclectic beyond that of the other Modern Languages, but, despite the oft-repeated assertion, the element of Anglo-Saxon is by no means so superior in quantity to the Latin and French elements as men would have us believe. Whence would come the very special sense of meaning in English and the feeling for delicacy of synonyms in English if not from familiarity with one of the great languages helping to form English? I doubt very much if, generally speaking, the study of Anglo-Saxon or Norman-French would contribute in half as great a degree to the sense of logic and reason in the ordering of English phrase. It would be interesting, and I fancy enlightening, to tabulate the educational antecedents of the admittedly great stylists in English, and it would only be fair to include those of the last

twenty years whose style has distinction and elegance. I wonder on which side of the ledger the account would lie. It is by no means unlikely that a very considerable number of English students really learn from the Classics their grammar, now sadly deficient among those who have missed their Greek and Latin, and have been brought up under the guidance of beaddled faddists. In this connection it is worth while to quote from a letter by Professor J. G. Eldridge, of the University of Idaho:

Since dropping the Latin requirement for admission, we find students coming very poorly prepared in English. We are therefore arranging, beginning next year, that students entering with less than two years of Latin shall take a special one-year course, largely vocabulary building from Latin and Greek roots, or else the regular elementary Latin.

The cry of the devotee of the practical, the demand for results, may certainly in this respect be made to jeer him out of court. No instructor who has ever labored with advanced courses in French composition and style can ever fail to bless the chance that sends him classically trained students. This is true for all the Modern Languages, but especially for French. The entrance examinations of students not classically trained show weakness in knowledge of grammar and little facility in expression. In College classes the contrast between students classically trained and those not so trained is striking. In fact, the general curve of excellence for all studies is apt to show in very marked degree the influence of classical studies. In a recent advanced course in Spanish, numbering about forty students, none of the nine who failed was classically trained, and the six or seven who stood highest were so trained. The latter had in addition at least a year of Greek or Latin or both in the College. So one might rove through a world of analogous situations in other subjects, history, general science, economics, philosophy. We have interesting French testimony regarding the decline of scholarship in the technical Schools after the paring away of the classical programmes.

When, in 1902, with the aid of arguments that made it appear to many unsuspecting Frenchmen that the classical languages were secretly associated with clericalism, Latin and Greek were banished from the programmes of the technical Schools by the Ministry of Public Instruction in France, almost irreparable harm was done to their standards of scholarship. It appeared that non-classically trained students were incapable of reaching former high levels of scientific thought and accomplishment. Hence a request from various Schools and from the Master of Forges and Furnaces that the former requirement be reestablished (see Dimnet, *France Herself Again*, 330 f.).

The classic literatures have been alike in the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the modern period, so much the warp and the woof of literature and art that to be ignorant of their more familiar aspects is to render oneself inappreciative of all that has been done up to the day before yesterday, or, still worse, spiritually and

intellectually inhospitable, ready to shut one's intellectual door with a rude bang upon the guest whose character and visage one does not too readily recognize. Professor Irving Babbitt remarks in one of his essays that in a modern class-room it is far easier to find appreciation on the part of students for Rostand's romantic *Cyrano* than for Racine's classic tragedy of *Phèdre*. And yet the matter goes much deeper than a mere question of exteriority and interiority, far below any surface difference between the literary critical-tags of romantic and classic. Actually—I use the word in a French sense—the up-to-date youth is either inhospitable to, or shut out from everything but what is the most ephemeral in art, literary or otherwise. When men are once cast adrift from classical, or rational, canons of criticism, they fall wonderingly upon the madly excessive or immoderate in art, and in a moment wonder changes to veneration. How else explain the maudlin court paid to the crew of cubists, imagists, and futurists, more than half of whom have played cynically upon the silly ignorance of their admirers?

In the compact of our *entente cordiale*, all is not for the party of the second part. Our classical friends can well second our efforts and so brace the solidarity of linguistic studies. It is for them to point out to students of Greek and Latin the main channels of absorption and imitation in modern literatures, the spirit in which this has been effected, where to find the most notable examples, and so forth. Secondly, it should be their task and their pleasure to show something of the lines of linguistic descent in other languages, with their offshoots, and to excite the curiosity and the interest of the student in the proofs of kinship.

Finally, without presumption be it said, the defenders of the Classics may find some means at hand to strengthen their own teaching and spur the interest of students in some of the means of teaching used and found good by the teachers of Modern Languages. This is true reciprocity, and in it must be found the united force to present a solid front to the hosts of the banal and the cheap, and unintelligent facility.

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REVIEWS

The Significance of Certain Colors in Roman Ritual.

By Mary Emma Armstrong. Menasha, Wisconsin: George Banta Publishing Company (1917). Pp. 52.

It seems desirable to enter upon a somewhat extended review of this Johns Hopkins University dissertation, because it is concerned with problems not sufficiently investigated before. To determine the significance of symbolism is a pursuit as fascinating as it is difficult. Miss Armstrong has undoubtedly performed a valuable service, not in the least impaired by the impossibility of attaining finality in all respects. No one is more conscious than the author of this dissertation of the need of caution and the remoteness of definitive results.